THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) The tourist traffic in the year 2001 and 2002 declined due to a number of reasons including overall global economic down trend, September 11 incident in the USA, war in Afghanistan, terrorist attack on Indian Parliament, tension on Indo-Pak border and the travel advisories issued by a number of foreign Governments.

(b) The foreign tourist arrivals declined by 4.2% and 6.9% during the year 2001 and 2002 respectively as compared to the corresponding previous years. However, in the last three months of 2002, there has been an upward swing of about 14%.

(b) The Department of Tourism, Govt. of India has the following short-term and long-term plans to make tourism more attractive and thereby attracting more foreign tourists to the country:

Positioning and maintaining tourism development as a National priority activity;

Enhancing and maintaining the competitiveness of India as a tourism destination;

Improving India's existing tourism products and expanding these to meet new market requirements;

Creation of world class infrastructure;

Developing sustained and effective market plans and programmes;

Special thrust to rural and small segment tourism;

Attention to civilizational issues and issues pertaining to civic administration, good governance and also of social and cultural values; and

Development of tourism circuits and tourism-cum-cultural hubs.

Reliance debenture deal with UTI

†*200. SHRI ABANI ROY:
SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether SEBI has recommended Government to order a CBI probe into Reliance's debenture deal with UTI in the early 1990s;

(b) if so, whether Government are also aware that Reliance's debenture deal with UTI in early 1990s have caused losses to Government worth several crores; and

(c) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) SEBI has sent a report about these debenture issues of Reliance Industries Limited subscribed by the erstwhile Unit Trust of India, suggesting appropriate action including referring the matter to CBI for investigation. SEBI has also initiated investigation proceedings with respect tothe validity of the debenture issues. The loss, if any, would be known only after the investigation is completed.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Leasing of shops at Airports

1232. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any policy regarding leasing out of space for shops at airports by the Airports Authority of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that such shops charge high prices for consumables; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that there is no control of AAI regarding the prices they charge from passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The licence for different kinds of shops at airports is granted through call of open tenders from the experienced parties/individuals for a period of 5 years on pre-determined terms and conditions of the licences agreement.

(c) and (d) The licenses are required to sell the branded items on printed Market Retail Price. In case of other consumable items available for sale in the shops, restaurant and snack bars and through vending